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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/754,553	01/12/2004	Patrice Aguilera	43315-201407	9284

26694 7590 01/14/2008  
VENABLE LLP  
P.O. BOX 34385  
WASHINGTON, DC 20043-9998

EXAMINER
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BEACH, THOMAS A

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3671

MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
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01/14/2008

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

10/754,553

Applicant(s)

AGUILERA, PATRICE

Examiner

Thomas A. Beach

Art Unit

3671

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 18 December 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 2, 7, 8, 15-17, 20 and 23-26 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 2, 7, 8, 15-17, 20, and 23-26 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)                                | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                       | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application                       |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

## DETAILED ACTION

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 2, 7, 8, 15-17, 20, and 23-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over French Reference FR 2473673 in view of Halvorsen et al 5,722,796. FR '673 shows subsea oil and/or gas exploration device (fig 1), comprising: at least one projecting guide member 8 comprising a plurality of generally vertically extending projections 18 arranged about a central axis; and at least one receiving guide member 9 comprising a receiving structure, each receiving structure having an inner surface defining a truncated cone (fig 2), each receiving structure being operative to engage the plurality of projections on the at least one projecting guide member, each receiving structure comprising a plurality of recesses extending through the inner surface of the receiving structure, each recess engaging one of the projections, such that each projection extends through one of the recesses 20. French Ref '673 does not show the cone wider than the projections where the projection extend throughout and vertically above the recesses. However, Halvorsen a similar subsea connection device utilizing projections and recess openings 53 to securely attach guided components and extending above the opening (fig 1). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of

ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify French Ref '673, as taught by Halvorsen, to include projections that extend through openings instead of recesses to improve the rigidity and stability of the connection.

As concerns claim 2, FR '673 shows each projection 18 comprises a tapered end portion (fig 2).

As concerns claim 7, FR '673 shows the receiving structure comprises a hollow body that defines a funnel, and wherein the recesses 20 are provided in a wall of the funnel (fig 2).

As concerns claim 8, FR '673 shows the projections of recesses 20 are arranged circumferentially around a center axis of the each projecting guide member and the recesses are arranged circumferentially around a center axis of each receiving guide member (fig 2).

As concerns claim 15, FR '673 shows the projections of each projecting guide member or recesses of each receiving guide member are arranged around a center axis of the each projecting guide member or each receiving guide member (fig 2).

As concerns claim 16, shows the projections of each projecting guide member or recesses of each receiving an individual guide member are evenly angularly distributed around a center axis of the each projecting guide member or each receiving guide member (fig 2).

As concerns claim 17, FR '673 shows the device is a base device that is to be located on the sea bottom (fig 1).

As concerns claim 18-19, FR '673 shows the device defines a well template and wherein the equipment to be seated thereon comprises a Christmas tree and/or a blow out preventer device 4.

As concerns claim 24, FR '673 shows at least one projecting member is arranged on subsea equipment that is to be landed (fig 1).

As concerns claim 25, FR '673 shows the at least one receiving guide member is arranged on subsea equipment that is to be landed (fig 1).

#### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

1. Claims 4, 21, and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over French Reference FR 2473673 alone. As concerns claims 4 and 21-22, examiner takes official notice that it would have been an obvious matter of design choice to modify FR '673 to include each projection with an outer layer of a low-friction material such as a polymer poly-tetra-fluor-ethylene to reduce the frictional contact between elements. Furthermore, routine experimentation would lead one of ordinary skill in the art to this application of material.

2. Claim 20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over French Reference FR 2473673 alone. As concerns claim 20, FR '673 shows the device 4 but does not show a pump, a de-sander, a de-oiler, a separator, a transformer or a subsea frequency converter. It would have been an obvious matter of design choice to modify the combination to include one of the known elements since they are all forms of well intervention devices and these particular equivalent are not disclosed to solve any

particular problem or purpose and it appears other equipment would work equally well. Furthermore, routine experimentation would lead one of ordinary skill in the art to these choices of devices.

### ***Response to Arguments***

3. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection. Applicant's arguments related to the single guide and receiving member have a plurality of projections and recesses are noted; however, as noted above the rejections show references that includes these elements as amended.

### ***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thomas A. Beach whose telephone number is 571.272.6988. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 8:00am-5:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Thomas Will can be reached on 571.272.6998. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571.273.8300.

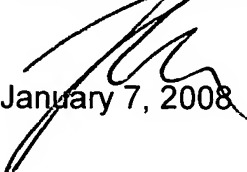
Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR.

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Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Thomas A. Beach



January 7, 2008

**THOMAS A. BEACH**  
Primary Examiner  
Group 3600